

REMARKS

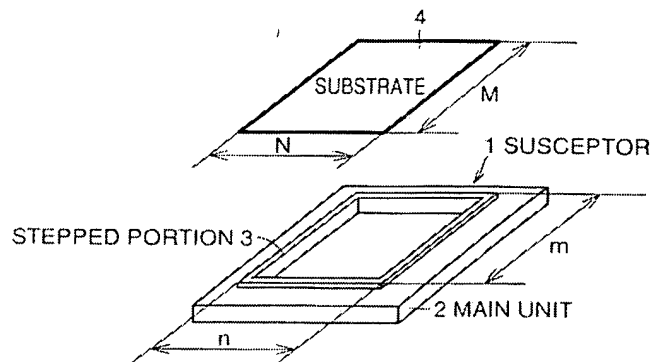
Entry of this Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. 1.116 is respectfully requested because it places the application into condition for allowance. Alternately, entry is proper because it places the application into better form for appeal. Claims 2, 4-7 and 10-12 are both pending in the application and under consideration by the Examiner. Claim 1 has been withdrawn from consideration. No new matter is believed to be added to this application by this Amendment.

Rejections Based Upon Inoue

Claims 2 and 6 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Inoue et al. (USP 5,468,344) in view of Hayakawa et al. (USP 5,254,171). The Examiner adds the teachings of Macdonald et al. (USP 6, 494,960) to reject claims 4-10. The Examiner adds the teachings of Gorczyca et al. (USP 6,368,410) to reject claim 5 in combination with Inoue et al. and Hayakawa et al. and to reject claim 7 in view of Inoue et al. Applicants traverse.

The present invention pertains to a susceptor that functions as a novel support for a semiconductor substrate. The inventive susceptor is shown in Fig. 1 of the application, which is reproduced below:

FIG. 1



The surface processing using the inventive susceptor finds a typical embodiment in claim 2 of the invention, which sets forth:

A surface processing method comprising the steps of:
masking a portion of a susceptor (1) forming contact with a substrate (4),
applying a blasting process on said surface of a susceptor (1) that has SiO₂ as a main component, and
etching the surface of said susceptor; and
wherein said susceptor includes:
a susceptor main body (2), and
a stepped portion (3) provided on said susceptor main body (2) to support said substrate (4) from the bottom, having a size smaller than said substrate (4), said stepped portion (3) being masked in said masking step.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies upon the clamp of Inoue depicted in Fig. 2, which is reproduced below:

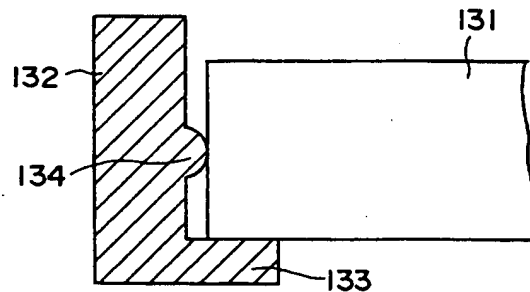


FIG. 2

In paragraph 2 of the Office Action the Examiner asserts: "Inoue also discloses that the clamp 124/susceptor includes a main body 124, a protruding portion/step portion 133 on the main body 132 to support substrate 131 from the bottom, the portion 133/step portion having a size smaller than the substrate 131 (fig.2), fig. 1 shows that masking layer 122 masks a portion of clamp/susceptor main body 124."

However, Inoue et al. at column 4 lines 7-9 states: "To improve the holding state, a claw 133 or a projection 134 may be provided to hold a sample 131 and a clamp 132 for supporting, as is shown in FIG. 2."

In contrast, the step portion 3 of the invention acts as a pedestal to support the substrate such that the film 5 does not over discharge. The clamping apparatus shown in figure 2 Inoue et al. has a fundamentally different structure and is incapable of performing this function.

The secondary references of Hayakawa et al, Macdonald et al. and Gorczyca et al. fail to address deficiencies of Inoue.

As a result, one having ordinary skill would not be motivated by Inoue and any combination of the secondary references to produce the invention as is set forth in independent claims 2 and 7. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has thus not been made. Claims dependent upon claims 2 and 7 are patentable for at least the above reasons.

These rejections are accordingly overcome and withdrawal thereof is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has allowed claims 11 and 12.

Foreign Priority

The Examiner has acknowledged foreign priority.

The Drawings

The Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate whether the drawing figures are acceptable in the next official action.

Conclusion

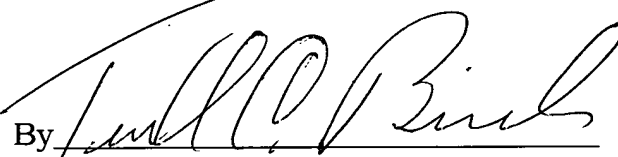
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert E. Goozner, Ph.D. (Reg. No. 42,593) at the telephone number of the undersigned

below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
Terrell C. Birch, #19,382

REG
TCB/REG:jls
0033-0701P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000

Attachment(s)